

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. By Appointment

Al Goetz, Conservation Agent

Board Members

Cheryl Rogers, Chairperson **Peter Bamber**
Carol Fishman
Joseph DiMaria
Seth Miller
Janice Sloan-Riolo
Lee Leach



□ The purpose of the Conservation Commission is to enforce the Commonwealth's Wetland Protection Act as well as the Town's Wetland by-Law. □ These laws identify areas subject to protection and include banks, wetlands, marshes, swamps and flats bordering on a body of water. In addition, land under a body of water and land subject to flooding are included as well as a 200-foot riparian zone along each side of a river or perennial stream. □ Any activity within these areas is subject to regulations as is any activity within a 100-foot buffer zone of the areas protected which would alter either the area under the protection or the buffer zone. The term activity refers to any act, which would remove, fill, dredge or alter.

The Conservation Commission issues Determinations identifying an activity as significant or non-significant. □ If significant, a Notice of Intent must be filed and work may only proceed under an Order of Conditions issued by the Commission.

The Commission conducts site reviews on work in progress as well as at project end.

If the work performed is the same as that initially proposed a Certificate of Compliance would be issued.

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This is an abbreviated description of the Commission's responsibility

What is the Wetlands Protection Act?

The Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. ch.131, s. 40) was enacted to protect wetlands, associated resource areas, and floodplains from possible negative impact of developement. Massachusetts enacted the Wetlands Protection Act in 1963. In doing so it became the first State to adopt regulations protecting wetlands.

What is the Rivers Protection Act?

The River's Protection Act was enacted by the Massachusetts Legislature on August 7, 1996. The River Act created a new resource area, the "Riverfront Area", which are administered as part of the State's Wetland Protection Act.

Who Protects our Wetlands and Rivers?

The Norwood Conservation Commission has jurisdiction for work taking place within the Wetland and Riverfront protected areas.

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What is Protected?

The following Resource Areas are protected:

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Land under water bodies

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Banks of water bodies

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Vegetated wetlands with the presence of at least 50% of wetland vegetation.

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Land periodically flooded by overflow from a water body or from runoff across the land.

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Riverfront Areas (a 200-foot riparian zone from each side of the river's annual high water mark).

Am I Altering a Wetland or Riverfront Area?

State and local laws regulate all activities that involve the filling, dredging, excavating or altering of Resource Areas in or near a wetland or water body.

This typically includes:

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Virtually any construction activity including everything from minor site preparation to large land altering development.

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Activities within the Resource area such as tree and bush removal, pruning, and the removal of naturally occurring vegetation.

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The changing of land contours, grading, or any alterations of slope.

How do I Work in the Resource and Riverfront Areas?

A "Notice of Intent" must be filed for work in any Resource Area. The form requires a detailed description of the planned activity. The applicant must show that if the Resource Area will be altered, the benefits will outweigh the damage. The Conservation Commission will then issue an "Order of Conditions", requiring adherence to the established performance standards.

Those seeking to develop or alter land within the "Riverfront Area" must also seek an Order of Conditions from the Norwood Conservation Commission.

How do I Work in the Buffer Zone?

In the buffer zone of the Resource Area the landowner has an option of filing a "Request for Determination" in order to demonstrate that through

engineering and operational safeguards the work will not alter a Resource Area. However if it does, a full hearing and the filing of a Notice of Intent are then necessary.

Remember:

Wetlands are an essential component of our ecosystem. They provide vital natural storage areas which act to reduce flood flows, help recharge our groundwater and aquifer, filter sediments and pollutants such as phosphates and nitrates from drainage runoff, and are a habitat themselves rich in wildlife and vegetation. As responsible citizens we must be aware of wetland areas and implement whatever protective measures necessary to preserve and protect them. When purchasing or developing land it is important to be knowledgeable of all legal wetland boundaries.

To obtain the most accurate information regarding local wetland areas and the Wetland or River's Protection Act please contact the Town of Norwood's Conservation Commission.

For More Information Please Contact: Al Goetz, Conservation Agent
(781) 762-0781

All agendas, forms, fees and guidelines for the [Conservation Commission](#) .

Last Updated Tuesday, 12 March 2013 11:06

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